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OREGON'S ECONOMY

Jobless claims surge 3,200% this week

Thousands have been laid off following state measures

Mike Rogoway The Oregonian/OregonLive

New unemployment claims in Oregon jumped by nearly 3,200% Tuesday amid wholesale layoffs triggered by the coronavirus outbreak.

An Oregon business leader predicted the state's unemployment rate could rise as high as 20% in the coming months as the economic catastrophe deepens, a rate that implies nearly 500,000 people would be looking for work. State economists say a recession is all but certain.

Wednesday night's numbers from the Oregon Employment Department are the first hard data on the depth of the state's economic crisis. On Tuesday alone, 18,500 people filed jobless claims — up from an average of 570 new claims a day in the preceding four weeks.

That's more in a single day than any week during the Great Recession, according to state economists. The numbers from the Oregon Employment Department are alarming but they're not surprising.

After Gov. Kate Brown ordered restaurants and bars closed Monday, part of a desperate effort to contain the coronavirus, the state's restaurant and lodging businesses

SEE ECONOMY, A10

THE COVID-19 OUTBREAK LEBANON

At the epicenter of Oregon's outbreak

Long hours, dwindling supplies at veterans home



Alicia Forseth, 21, shown in the window of her temporary housing, is working tirelessly at the Edward C. Allworth Veterans' Home in Lebanon. Beth Nakamura, staff

Fedor Zarkhin The Oregonian/OregonLive

LEBANON — First, caregiver Alicia Forseth noticed that one of the elderly veterans at the nursing home was no longer allowed to help direct traffic at the crosswalk leading to the elementary school next door.

Then she saw the cleaning staff disinfecting all the door-knobs and surfaces at the Edward C. Allworth Veterans' Home.

Within days, the global coronavirus pandemic arrived in Lebanon.

It invaded the very unit where Forseth works as a nursing assistant, her first job after getting certified.

The disease struck three veterans who have become some of her closest friends among the 14 residents now diagnosed with COVID-19.

Forseth's account from inside the state-run home offers the only first-hand view so far into what's happening at the epicenter of Oregon's coronavirus outbreak.

Forseth, 21, said she's speaking out because people can't help the community if they don't know what's going on inside.

SEE LEBANON, A9

Coronavirus cases

In Oregon: 88 confirmed cases; three deaths

U.S.: 14,250 confirmed cases; 205 deaths

Worldwide: 244,517 confirmed cases; 10,030 deaths

Source: Oregon Health Authority, Johns Hopkins University as of 9 p.m. Thursday

BUSINESS

What's closed, what's open, what's next?

What exactly does the state order for restaurants and bars to close mean for diners and businesses? We answer your most asked questions. B9

A&E

Did on-screen pandemics prepare us?

In some ways, the cinema has been getting us ready for COVID-19 for years. Plus: How coronavirus is hitting the entertainment industry. A&E12

NATION

McConnell proposes \$1,200 checks

Republicans unveil a sweeping response to the outbreak as lawmakers race to craft a \$1 trillion rescue package to shore up households. A12

GAS TERMINAL

Feds OK Jordan Cove project

Federal regulators on Thursday approved the liquid natural gas terminal and pipeline, possibly setting up a battle with the state. A2





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